

ABOUT THE STATE

HAPPENINGS OF INTEREST FROM DIFFERENT SECTIONS

Herbert Ravill, aged 95 years, Montgomer's oldest resident, died in that town Feb. 18.

Boys won the two highest honors in this year's senior class at the Rutland high school, George Pease and Paul Gill.

The demonstration of Sunshine biscuits in Wilmington by Miss Sarah Light must have been a very illuminating affair.

Gov. Gates has appointed Miss Evelyn S. Lease librarian of the Kellogg-Hubbard library at Montpelier, a member of the Vermont library commission.

Mrs. William H. Taft, who was thrown from her wagon in Vergennes Feb. 11, when a span of runaway horses collided with her outfit, died Wednesday at the Mary Fletcher hospital without ever regaining consciousness. Her skull was fractured.

Mrs. Albert M. Allbe, aged 90 years, who last December observed the 70th anniversary of her marriage to Mr. Allbe, died Friday at her home in Bellows Falls. She was the third person over 80 years of age to die in the town of Rockingham within three days. Besides her husband, she leaves three daughters.

It is claimed for H. C. Bogue and his son, Max E. Bogue, of Cambridge, that both exceed in height Fred R. Smith of Bellows Falls, who, at the time of his marriage a few days ago, was claimed to be the tallest man in Vermont. Mr. Smith's height is six feet nine inches, where as the senior Mr. Bogue is seven feet tall and his son measures seven feet one inch. The latter is but 18 years old and weighs 220 pounds. The Bogue family were for many years residents of Enosburg.

George Maddad of Rutland, an Oriental rug dealer, well known throughout Vermont, has just heard from the American Museum of Natural History in New York, where he sent a fossil fish head which he picked up on Mount Lebanon, Syria, while visiting his native land in 1914. Prof. L. Huxslo, curator of the department of ichthyology, states that the fossil is new to science, belonging to the genus Colodus, and is of the chalk period, which makes it about 6,000,000 years old. Professor Huxslo is to publish a scientific description of the Rutland man's find.

Brattleboro Fair Has \$1,650 Deficit.

The board of directors of the Valley Fair association met Friday at Brattleboro and considered the financial statement of the 1915 fair of the association.

This shows that all bills have been paid and that there is a deficit of \$3,400. Of this, \$1,400 is represented by permanent improvements in the form of new buildings made last year, of which a part is to be charged to the account of the 1916 fair. A deficit of \$350 from the July 4 races of 1914 has been paid, which leaves an actual deficit from the 1915 fair itself of \$1,650.

Considering the conditions under which the fair was held last year, with a heavy rain on the opening day necessitating the postponement one day, and another rainy day at the close, the officials feel that the association is fortunate in not having to face a larger deficit.

OVERSEER BACKED UP.

By Majority of Voters in Rockingham Caucus Last Evening.

Bellows Falls, Feb. 19.—The annual caucus of the town of Rockingham was held last evening in the opera house. Three contests added zest to the meet, in which was the largest attendance of any caucus in recent years.

In a contest for the nomination for lister for three years, Patrick E. O'Brien of Rockingham defeated Joseph Severance of Rockingham by a vote of 105 to 52. Peter Dorand, the present incumbent, was opposed by Charles S. Albee for the nomination for overseer of the poor. This contest had caused much comment because this town pays \$1.56 per capita of its population for the support of the poor.

Mr. Dorand's method of conducting the office were approved by the caucus, his vote being 118 to Mr. Albee's 72. George F. Alexander of Saxtons River won the nomination for first constable over Fred C. Rand of Saxtons River by a vote of 11 to 14. William H. Savage, a street railway conductor, was elected second constable without opposition.

Opportunity Knocks

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Who Will Claim Them?

Letters unclaimed for at the Barre post-office for the week ending Feb. 17 were: Men—Corina Bernasconi, R. D. Brodie, Angelo Bolzani, H. E. W. Chutter, Steve Cervone, 327 North Main street; Joseph Cahill, Wm. L. Gleason, R. Perio, Edwin C. Page, Sacinta Ruid Pedraja, Geo. Romina, Sara Rufina, Taulina Rizzi.

Women—Mrs. Alice Hanson Atwood, Mrs. Mary Dembrowski, Mrs. Edward Matott, Mrs. John Morse, Mrs. Grant Sargent.

Firms—Andoni Granite Co., American Saw Mill Co., Barre Realty company.

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RURAL SCHOOLS

Material Presented by C. R. Bee-man, Supt. Schools, Williams-town, Vt.

"Let Prosperity Come to the Rural School."

"Prosperity should come to the rural school to the degree that every country child can attend a sanitary schoolhouse, situated in an attractive playground, all in charge of a good teacher, who is in sympathy with country life. Too often the human plant is allowed to struggle against an unfavorable environment in order that the school tax may be kept where it began 40 years ago.

"The rural school interest is the largest single educational interest in our country. There are in round numbers 12,000,000 country boys and girls attending the one-room rural school. Only about 25 per cent even finish the eighth grade. In this age of scientific agriculture and country life development, it is of supreme importance that all the boys and girls living on the farms shall have an opportunity for education in a country high school. It is during the high school age that life's ideals and plans are formed. As it is now, the country boys and girls are sent to the city high school to be educated away from country life, or else they go no further than the schoolhouse, the absence of educational direction and training comes at the most important years of their lives, when we consider their future social and industrial efficiency.

"The weak points in the rural school system will never be strengthened until the country people take more interest and pride in their own educational institution and are willing to support that institution better financially. Prosperity must come to the rural school. More money must be expended for trained teachers, for better buildings and equipment, for attractive playgrounds. There is no other way.

"If seeing is believing, then action should follow conviction in rural school improvement. This kind of action is urged, viz., That each man and woman on the farm go to the March meeting and voice their sentiments for needed school improvements. In the majority of cases the school board is anxious to do what the people want done. In case the school directors are incompetent, then elect directors who will give a school worthy of the name. Too often school directors are expected to pinch the dollars rather than be leaders for school betterment. If there is a single patron who reads this who is undecided as to what steps to take to secure a better school, let this suggest this suggestion:

"First—Visit a school with a good equipment and teaching force, so you may have a standard by which to judge.

"Second—Visit your own school and note how your school measures up with the good school visited.

"Third—Go to the March meeting and vote for directors who will make your school as good as the best.

"Fourth—If you will not do this third suggestion, do not dare to call yourself interested in the welfare of your own children."

Hygienic Seating.

When you visit a school it will not require very expert knowledge to determine whether the children are seated in accordance with good healthful development. At this time of the year you can easily tell whether the air in the school room is conducive to good health and state.

State Superintendent Blair says: "The desks are too large. Many schools have desks for no children under 10 years of age. Usually nearly all the children are under 10 years of age. The feet of the children do not rest on the floor when they sit erect. He is quiet little of the time for he must shift his position to escape discomfort. The desk is too high for his arms. This in time causes much of the spinal trouble of this age. This unnatural position and the discomfort make continuous study impossible. Desks are not placed correctly. A row from front to rear of room should be composed of desks of the same size. They are usually arranged in rows, the smallest in front, behind this the next larger and so on, ending in the rear with the largest size. This causes six- and seven-year-old children to sit on seats for eight- and nine-year-old children. Their feet do not rest on the floor and the desk is too low. The result is the child cannot sit upright and work at his desk. He must lean forward, making him round shouldered and hollow chested. Frequently there is not a seat in the house that correctly fits any child. The remedy is to reset the desks. If there are no No. 5 or No. 6 desks and rears they should be supplied. The desks are also too far apart. The desks should be so placed that when the back of the child rests against the back of his seat, the desk in front should come within an inch and a half from his body. When the desk is too far away, the child must lean forward, thus causing round shoulders. Or he must sit on the edge of the seat. He might as well sit on a backless bench. The remedy is to place the desks closer together.

"The importance of proper seating cannot be over-estimated.

"First, as promoting health. It has only recently been discovered that many weaknesses of the body are due to spinal curvatures. The nerves supplying the vital organs come largely from the spinal cord and through the nerves between the vertebrae. When the spine is out of shape, these nerves are compressed and their work cannot be properly done.

"Second, as affecting success in life. A mis-shapen person is handicapped in the contest for success in life. A well-formed body is the greatest recommendation to a young person seeking to win a place in the world's work. It is criminal negligence to compel growing children to sit six hours of a day in school desks which deform their bodies.

"Third, as affecting school work. Good order and good school room work cannot be secured when children cannot sit still in comfort. Many a school is hard to manage and the work is poor because the children have not comfortable seats."

(Extracts from annual report of Supt. O. J. Kern.)

"Soon I hope to present material on the proper heating and ventilation of rural schools.

"Let prosperity come to the rural school."

Consoling.

"What did you say your age was?" he remarked, between dashes.

"Well, I didn't say," smartly rejoined the girl, "but I've just reached 21."

"Is that so?" he returned, comically.

"What detained you?"—Punch Bowl.

24 CITIES RULED BY COMMISSIONS

Statistics Are Prepared By Official of the Bureau of the Census Showing Some Interesting Developments.

Washington, D. C., Feb. 21.—Director Sam. L. Rogers, of the bureau of the census, department of commerce, is soon to issue a set of tables giving special financial statistics for 24 cities—eight having the council form of government during the fiscal years 1913 and 1915, eight having the commission form during those years, and eight having the council form in 1913 and the commission form in 1915. These tables were prepared under the supervision of Mr. Starke M. Grogan, chief statistician for statistics of cities.

The eight cities having the council form in each year are Indianapolis, Ind., Hartford, Conn., Youngstown, O., Troy, N. Y., Peoria, Ill., Little Rock, Ark., Davenport, Mo., and Charlotte, N. C. Their estimated population in 1915 ranged from 200,000 for Indianapolis to 38,300 for Charlotte, averaging 94,000.

The eight cities having the commission form of government in each year are Birmingham, Ala., Lowell, Mass., Salt Lake City, Utah, Des Moines, Ia., Pueblo, Colo., Topeka, Kan., Montgomery, Ala., and Austin, Tex. Their estimated population in 1915 ranged from 164,000 for Birmingham to 33,200 for Austin, averaging 82,000.

The eight cities having the council form in the earlier year and the commission form in the later are Dayton, O., Reading, Wilkes-Barre, and Allentown, Pa., Covington, Ky., Saginaw, Mich., Springfield, O., and Joplin, Mo. Their estimated population in 1915 ranged from 124,000 for Dayton to 33,000 for Joplin, averaging 69,000.

The three groups have been made as nearly comparable as possible, but it will be noted that the average size of the council cities is greater than that of the commission cities, while these in their turn are larger than the cities which changed from the council to the commission form between 1913 and 1915.

Per Capita Expenditures.

The salient facts brought out by the figures are:

The per capita expenditures for all governmental costs—expenses of general departments, expenses of public service enterprises, interest on indebtedness, and outlays for permanent improvements—increased during the two-year period from \$23.70 to \$23.33 in the council cities, taken as a group, from \$19.92 to \$22.20 in the commission cities, and from \$16.44 to \$18.76 in the cities governed by the council in the earlier year and by commission in the later.

The per capita expenditures for outlays alone increased from \$8.40 to \$10.80 in the council cities, from \$4.60 to \$5.86 in the commission cities, and from \$4.07 to \$5.21 in the cities which changed from the council to the commission form between the earlier and the later year. This class of expenditures fluctuates so greatly from year to year, however, that a two-year comparison covering a total of only 24 cities does not provide a sufficiently broad basis for definite conclusions.

The per capita payments for current expenses and interest—that is, for all governmental cost except outlays—increased from \$15.30 to \$17.53 in the group of council cities, from \$13.32 to \$16.34 in the commission group, and from \$12.37 to \$13.55 in the group which changed from council to commission during the two-year period. The increase in these expenditures was more than twice as great in the council cities as in the commission cities, and nearly twice as

great in the council cities as in those governed by council in the earlier year and by commission in the later.

Excess of Expenditures Over Revenues.

The council cities, taken as a group, show a per capita excess of expenditures over revenues amounting to 92 cents in the fiscal year 1913 and \$4.65 in the fiscal year 1915; and in seven of the eight cities, taken individually, the expenditures during the later year were in excess of the receipts.

In the group of commission cities the per capita excess of expenditures over revenues increased during the two-year period from 39 cents to \$1.37; and in five of the eight cities, taken individually, the expenditures during the later year were in excess of the receipts.

In the group of cities which changed from the council to the commission form between 1913 and 1915, the excess of expenditures over revenues increased during the two-year period from 74 cents to 96 cents per capita; and in four of these cities, taken separately, the expenditures during the later year exceeded the revenues.

Levies of property taxes (which provide on an average, between one-half and two-thirds of the total revenues) in the council cities increased from \$14.73 per capita in 1913 to \$16.36 in 1915; in the commission cities, from \$11.11 to \$12.31; and in the cities which changed from council to commission during the two-year period, from \$10.08 to \$11.24.

Indebtedness.

The per capita net indebtedness (funded and floating debt less sinking fund assets) of the council-governed group of cities increased from \$29.04 to \$36.27 during the two years, and the corresponding item for each individual city increased.

The per capita net indebtedness of the commission-governed group decreased during the same period from \$41.65 to \$41.49. Three of the eight cities, taken individually, showed an increase in this respect, and the other five a decrease.

The per capita net indebtedness of the eight cities having the council form in 1913 and the commission form in 1915 increased from \$37.79 in the earlier year to \$39.11 in the later. In five of these cities, taken separately, this item showed an increase, and in three a decrease.

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ESTATE OF GEORGE M. WEBSTER

State of Vermont, District of Washington, S. The Honorable Probate Court for the District of Vermont:

To all persons interested in the estate of George M. Webster, late of Cabot, in said district, deceased, GREETING:

WHEREAS, said court has assigned the 8th day of March next for examining and settling the accounts of the executor of the estate of said deceased and for a decree of the residue of said estate to the lawful claimants of the same, and ordered that public notice thereof be given to all persons interested in said estate by publishing this order in three successive issues of a newspaper published at the city of Barre, in said district;

THEREFORE, you are hereby notified to appear at the probate office in Montpelier, in said district, on the day assigned, and there to contest the allowance of said account if you see cause, and to establish your right as heirs, legatees and lawful claimants to said residue.

Given under my hand, this 19th day of February, 1916.

FRANK J. MARTIN, Judge.

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